

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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1873.

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No. 15.

IN DREAMS.

BY GLEN CAROL.

Last night when sleep her balmy crown
Upon her head, and with
Within the mystic land of dreams
I found the longest-for rest.

And years of anguish dark and long,
We all over life have known,

Forgetful we and west and wrong,
That shuns the weary day.

Again the summer-time was near
To us and home and birth
Again within your eyes I read
A pure and perfect truth.

Once more we trod the paths old,
The paths we used to tread,

Were round us, and my happy heart
Went revelling—in dreams.

For we alone the flowers bloomed,
And wild-birds sang with

Again within your eyes I read
As by some magic spell—

And once again my eyes unclosed
To see the weary day—

Love, hope, health, and youth,
Were vanished, all away!

JESSIE DALE.

The Conductor's Daughter;

or,

The Plot Against the Pennsylvania Railroad.

BY BURR THORNBURY, Esq.,
AUTHOR OF "ST. LEON'S LOVE," "RAVEN-
WOOD," "SEALD, THE SCOUT," "AG-
NES ATHER," ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

THE OWL LINE.

Midnight!

Along its iron path swiftly sped the mid-
night train; with its precious freight of
human lives.

Through the darkness shone the head-
light of the locomotive like the eye of a
Cyclops, illuminating the track with a rushing
radiance, and seeming to show the
monster that followed the way he could
with safety go.

To many—most, perhaps, save those
accustomed to it—it apparently blind
rushed through the night, on board a rail-
road train, at times a thrilling sense
of insecurity. It seems like madness. By
revers that flow darkly below, and whose
drowning waves are sometimes seen to
glisten half-fully in the glancing, gliding
light which strikes their surface; over
trail bridges, under which gloom the black
waters; on the brink of precipices, down
which to be hurled would be almost cer-
tain death; sometimes over house-tops, and
again through damp and dismal
tunnels roll the rapid wheels, with only
those narrow lines of iron to keep them
true.

Of course the danger is but little greater
than by day. The traveller seeks the sleep-
ing-coach, and passes the night in slumber.
Yet often a thought is given to the
terrible possibility of a plunge into some
watery chasm, or down some rocky em-
bankment, and he shudders as the picture
of such an awakening—which death may
make very brief—forces itself upon his
mind.

The dangers of railway travel are always
positive and present, though safety of
travel is to be presumed upon. A
man in a moving sleeping-car is not as
safe as he is in his own bed, albeit the
house may be struck by lightning and he
killed, while the car and its occupants may
reach their destination without disaster or
delay; but unless he is a hardened veter-
an of a traveller, he will be apt to remark
to himself, even if unconsciously, as he
retires in the former, that there is a def-
inite possibility of his never beholding the
light of day again. He will think this
thought as the train runs along through the
night, when, with a daylong sense of his
position and its possible perils, he would
not give one moment's heed to them.

The Owl Line, in charge of Conductor
Dale, was on its way from city to city. Its
name was appropriately given, because
of its night-time running.

"Keep a particularly sharp look-out
ahead, Edwards," the conductor had said
to the engineer before they left the depot.
The latter had promised faithfulness,
though neither the request nor the promise
was necessary in the case of one so capable
and watchful as Edwards. He knew, too,
that the conductor had really not intended
an admonition, further than to give ex-
pression to an anxiety they both felt.

"If we could only catch some of these
rascals in the act!" said Edwards.

"I'd throat 'em under the boiler," said
Fireman Phillips.

"A good idea," returned the engineer.
They'll have to burn her after, and we
might as well use their brimstone bodies
now."

He was a stalwart, manly fellow, this
engineer; not over twenty-eight years of
age, bright and honest-eyed, black-haired
and white-throated, with a sort of rugged
beauty, quite attractive. He was one of
those honest, able, trusty, valued work-
ing men, intelligent and sensible, who
are not ashamed to be known as the



THE BRIDGE OVER THE NEHAMINY CREEK TAMPERED WITH.

sons of labor; who don't fret because they
can't be bank clerks or salesmen; but who
go to work and keep at it, earn good
wages, buy themselves a pleasant home,
marry some good, lovable girl, and live
as happy, independent and self-respecting
as other people.

Honor to such! and especial honor to
Engineer Edwards, for he was one of the
very best of them.

He had not obtained a wife yet, but he
was betrothed to an sweet and son-
nable girl, who had earned her own
honest living, and supported a sick mother
besides.

As his train moved along, Engineer
Edwards had some reflections of his own,
though not for one moment did he relax
his vigilance to indulge in them.

"It's a little curious this devil-business,
as I call it," he said to himself: "throw-
ing a train from the track, or attempting
to do so, is about as bad a game as a fellow need
want to play. Seems to me there appear
to be more fun than ever in it to those
who try it. What's the object, I wonder? or,
rather, I don't wonder, but just say it,
I have my opinion, and Dale has his. He
may be part right, and I think I am, too.
There's a fellow in the city behind us
who I know perfectly well would be
glad to see old Winimantis plunge
into a hundred-foot embankment and die
under her. Wouldn't she, old girl?"

He appealed to his locomotive as if it
were a human being; as to him indeed it
was. Between it and himself the most
friendly and confidential relations existed,
and if Winimantis had chosen she could
have told all the secrets of Engineer Ed-
wards's life.

He kept nothing from her. She knew
Lizzie Allen's name as well as he did; she
knew that this name Lizzie was the sweet-
est and best girl in the whole city; and she
knew the very tender and satisfactory
character of the intercourse of the two.
She approved of it so well for Manton
Edwards was a very good master to her, and
she knew he would be a very good
husband to Lizzie.

He kept nothing from her. She knew

Mr. Dale, knowing all

for you would have added to the obligation.
How did you discover their work? Ex-
cuse me though for a time; I must see that
we are not run into from behind, as the Owl
has been before. Edwards, please examine
the bridge further. I do not think any
serious damage has been done yet. The
screws must have been tightened off."

"They were, sir," said Cecil Parnell.

Mr. Dale hurried back to the train,

meeting as he went many of the pas-
sengers who were anxious to know what had
occurred the delay.

"What's up, conductor?" was their in-
quiry.

"Bridge tampered with," he said as he
passed them.

Reaching the train, he found a consider-
able ferment of impatience prevailing
among the remaining passengers—or some
of them at least.

"Are we to stay here all night?" was
demanded.

"You are better off here, I suppose,
than in the bottom of the Nehaminy," re-
turned Conductor Dale, quietly.

Who has not noticed that if a delay en-
ters a train, a certain proportion of the
passengers on board begin almost immedi-
ately to fidget—some to openly complain.

"Forward, forward," they say, if not in
words, in expression. If they go forward,
and disaster follows, these same indi-
viduals are (if they survive) apt to be in-
consistent enough to censure.

It is hard to please everybody.

The train was made safe again, being
reduced to a crawl, a certain proportion of the
passengers on board begin almost immedi-
ately to fidget—some to openly complain.

"Forward, forward," they say, if not in
words, in expression. If they go forward,
and disaster follows, these same indi-
viduals are (if they survive) apt to be in-
consistent enough to censure.

"I approve of it," muttered her master.

"That is, of the drobbing."

But very soon a different sound came
from her iron throat—the sudden, sharp,
shriek warning of "down break."

"What's up now?" wondered the engi-
ner as he shut off steam. "A red lantern
swinging like a ship-light."

Winimantis gave a long, loud, trium-
phant whistle.

"I approve of it," muttered her master.

"That is, of the drobbing."

But very soon a different sound came
from her iron throat—the sudden, sharp,
shriek warning of "down break."

"What's up now?" wondered the engi-
ner as he shut off steam. "A red lantern
swinging like a ship-light."

"You will go with us?" he said, ad-
dressing Cecil Parnell.

"I'd throat 'em under the boiler," said
Fireman Phillips.

"A good idea," returned the engineer.
They'll have to burn her after, and we
might as well use their brimstone bodies
now."

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engineer; not over twenty-eight years of
age, bright and honest-eyed, black-haired
and white-throated, with a sort of rugged
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those honest, able, trusty, valued work-
ing men, intelligent and sensible, who
are not ashamed to be known as the

The brakes had been applied, and the
train had slowed down almost to a stop.
"We always mind the red," muttered
Edwards. "What's wrong ahead there?"
he next demanded as the wheels rested ex-
tremely.

"There's enough wrong, as you soon
can satisfy yourself," returned his voice.
"It's well I stopped you or you would
have gone down."

"This way, if you please," said the
engineer, "I can see the bridge."

The conductor and engineer both left
the train and went forward.

"Anything the matter with the bridge?"
inquired the engineer.

"Look for yourselves."

The unknown man jumped from the
road-bed, followed by the other two, and
held his lantern so that its rays revealed
the track-timbers of the bridge.

"Diabolical!" ejaculated Conductor
Dale.

"Come then who've done this!" cried
Engineer Edwards.

The supporting timbers bore fresh
marks of an anger and other instruments
of similar use, which had been employed
to weaken the structure so that the next
train in crossing would crush it down.

"Why did you not obtain assistance
and have these villains caught at the work?"
asked Mr. Dale, with a certain sternness

of suspicion.

"If you will believe me, sir, I had a
particular object in doing as I did."

The young plotter lowered his voice to a
more mysterious tone as he continued: "What
that object is, I leave you for the to
guess, only intimating to you my present
position as an employee of the company as a
representative of justice may be. I may, that
you are to be shocked by what I have done."

"I can not say that I have not
done much to earn your respect, sir," he
said Cecil Parnell, smiling.

"I do not believe it," said Mr. Dale.

"I do not believe it," said Cecil Parnell.

"I do not believe

"How long have I been here?" she asked after a brief pause.

"It's coming daytime now, and minus knows when she first feels I know."

Yes, she recalled the cheerful scene in the dining-room at the table, before the change came. "She remembered hearing the chink chink to the set of the table.

"How was I concealed here, Lucy?"

"In a cage."

"In what part of the city am I?"

"Misses doesn't ask too many questions. I don't tell."

"I suppose not. What matters it where I am, since I am a prisoner? I can only hope that you, Lucy, will be my judicess."

"I am, judge."

"I am glad of that; you will not be a cruel one."

"Oh, no; only very close; minus must expect to have me about night all the time."

"I will not object to that," said Mrs. Howland.

She looked at the quadroon closely. As the woman had informed her, she was evidently from the South. The introduction of plantation to that region into her speech was of itself enough to warrant such a conclusion. Besides, there was that peculiar subserviency of manner rarely to be found in such perfection among any but those once held to servitude.

"Will minus prepare to go down now?" she inquired.

"To the parlor?"

"No, to minus' own sitting room."

"Am I to have a private parlor?"

"Yes, all to herself. Hh! it isn't such a bad place."

"I want my freedom, Lucy. I am wickedly confined here, and—"

"Would minus please talk to Mr. Marbury about that?" interrupted the quadroon, with a smile.

Mrs. Howland saw that her attendant was at least for the present, firmly loyal to her masters.

Arranging her dress as best she could, but desisting to put on a single article of the rich and varied attire, which Lucy informed her was for her use if she chose to wear it, Mrs. Howland descended one flight of stairs to the apartment which was to be her prison parlor.

It had one window, which looked out upon a dwelling whose deserted appearance proclaimed it unoccupied.

"Nobody lives there," said Lucy, as if to intimate that it was useless to hope that some one might there be found to appeal to for help.

"I am indeed a prisoner," reflected the lady, despatching.

CHAPTER XIII.

GETTING IN OR OUT.

Cecil Farnell as Wilmer Dorrance so ingratiated himself in Conductor Dale's favor when the latter called upon him, and presented such evidence of his respectability, that he was cordially invited to return the call whenever he felt so disposed.

Cecil was of course well pleased at this, since it was just what he had plotted for.

He was not a villain by nature, but had commenced life as a page in a theatre, and from that time forward been accustomed to the society of worldly, unprincipled men, who had found the handsome, graceful youth in many ways serviceable to them. He had gradually become morally corrupted, until he was capable of doing any wickedness, short of vulgar crime, for Cecil's sensibilities were refined in them, so that prompted to advance his material prospects.

Young as he was, he had seen much of gaudy, unscrupulous life; so much in fact that he was already tired of it. His indolent nature longed for repose. He was not used to become more and more enervated with false splendor. He had a dream of retirement to some quiet love-spot, if the companionship of some sweet and gentle being whom he could call wife.

He possessed means to enable him to gratify this desire. Cecil Farnell was a young man of very considerable means, and the reflection that much of his money had been obtained by daring and skillful forgery did not dislodge him in the least. His mortal nature was dead; only his heart was yet alive.

He was in the pursuit of a nefarious design, to discover the pure and gentle Jessie Dale, he regarded the event as a portion of that mysterious "luck" or providence— he associated the terms thus earnestly that had always been so good to him. He accepted it as his fortunate fate.

To win the heart of Jessie Dale was now the great, new, final purpose of his life. He fell in with her to love him, to care for him, to rescue him, to never around him with greater delight, would be all that he could ask for, except what he already possessed. And it is not to be doubted that this strange dresser would be happy, for a time at least, if he could bring his selfish dream to pass.

Therefore when Stedall Dale, in his gestures, kindly heart, putting down some out-trading suspicion of his features, but to conceal the look of jealous hate, which he felt was there expressed.

In the street he and Mr. Dale parted, the latter inviting him to call again.

They separated in the street, Mr. Dale going directly to the depot, Cecil walking around a square and then returning to the front of the house he had left.

The shutters of the parlor windows were not yet closely closed. The curtains were drawn, but he could peer in, which he did, to discover, not by direct vision, but by shadowy picturing, two youthful figures sitting in the mellow glow of the chandelier. They were Jessie and his rival, he well knew. There was a low musical murmur of voices, varied now and then by a girlish laugh.

What a sweet picture of lovers' felicity he knew the room presented! His love, if it needed strengthening, was strengthened from that moment. A bad, bitter, blind feeling of jealousy—that unhappy evidence of love—rose in his breast against the successful warden within, who knew not yet that he had a rival.

Cecil Farnell felt that a heaven was near, from which he was forever to be sent out. Within was a realized dream—his own sweet dream in tender perfection—yet its bloom was not for him. He felt lonely, sad and forlorn.

"Why should this young Lester," he said to himself, bitterly, "who has all the good things of life, can give a step to back me now?" Why need he come to this quiet home now, when the doors of pleasure are wide open to him everywhere?

His plan to rid himself of his rival has failed, I see; or else love triumphs over pride; or else for once pride has taken its proper place in the train of love. But I will be his yet, I—"

His bitter, threatening musing were suddenly cut short.

A sharp pistol-shot sounded from the opposite side of the street, and the glass above his head was shattered by a bullet.

A quick, startled cry was heard within.

"What means this?" ejaculated Cecil Farnell, as he girded softly away, not wishing it, above all things, to be supposed that he had fired the shot.

Jessie shuddered at the thought of what might have been past freely in her mind.

"It would have been terrible indeed," said Cecil, as if shocked to recall the dreadful possibility. "I rejoice that I was enabled to avert the disaster."

"I wish I could persuade my father to give up that tiresome railroad service, and demás." "I am sure he has done enough of it."

"How many years have you been engaged in that way, Mr. Dale?" inquired the young man, turning from Jessie to her father.

"How was I engaged here, Lucy?"

"In a cage."

"In what part of the city am I?"

"Misses doesn't ask too many questions. I don't tell."

"I suppose not. What matters it where I am, since I am a prisoner? I can only hope that you, Lucy, will be my judicess."

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She looked at the quadroon closely. As the woman had informed her, she was evidently from the South. The introduction of plantation to that region into her speech was of itself enough to warrant such a conclusion. Besides, there was that peculiar subserviency of manner rarely to be found in such perfection among any but those once held to servitude.

"Aunt, young Dorrance is up stairs with father," she said, "the one who saved the train from disaster that night."

"Well, I am child, it is very well for him to be there if he lives so near and chooses to come, but it seems to me that a great many strangers have found our house under similar circumstances of late."

"Not a great many, aunty; only three. And you don't wish poor Mrs. Howland had never come, do you?"

"Oh, no; only I am worried thinking about her all the time, and since we can't help her, I would just as lieve that somebody else had met with her, and not you."

"That is about the same as thinking she had never come, isn't it, aunty?" said Jessie in gentle reprobation. "But there is Harry."

"Harry, child! you don't call him that, do you?"

"He said I must; everybody does."

"What does he come here for, Jessie?"

"To learn what kind of tea is best for a cold, aunty," said Jessie, slyly.

"You are always making fun of my doctoring notions," returned Aunt Mary, rather severely. "But I am sure if I had been so careful with you, you would have gone from us long ago."

"I am indeed a prisoner," reflected the lady, despatching.

"Go where, aunty?"

"You naughty girl, Jessie! You know well enough what I mean. Will you please hand me that cup?"

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Jessie, dolefully. "Now you are making me another mess. I won't take it, aunty; you needn't make it."

"But I thought you looked awfully this afternoon, my child. Doesn't your head ache?"

"Not a bit, aunty."

"I was sure from your appearance that it did. But you are beginning with a cold at least."

"No, no, aunty," protested Jessie. "I haven't got well of my old one yet."

"There, Jessie!" exclaimed her aunt, in a tone of reprobation and rebuke; "you just now said you were not feeling unwell, when I was certain that something ailed you; you must take the tea."

"It's the tea that gives me the cold, aunty," pursued her niece, in the droll style of argument. "Don't you understand? I take such quantities of which my friend speaks so confidently. But I hold that it is a trick, instead of a fiction."

"And I hold that it is nothing at all!" answered the old Squire, with almost stern decision.

"And yet it is difficult to account for your presence here?"

"Is it impossible, then, that we should both be so attracted to the spot by the renown of the White Lady?"

"An absurd fiction of that kind would not have attracted me."

"I admitted just now that I was curious, if you remember; and I am ready to confess further that I have a great desire to investigate the phenomenon of which my friend speaks so confidently. But I hold that it is a trick, instead of a fiction."

"And I hold that it is nothing at all!"

"I am glad to perceive that you agree with me so far," said Mr. de Lucy, mildly.

"Neither do I know any living soul, trusting that when I die, the judgment I have made will be as sound as my own."

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When he was told kindly and feelingly of his wife's death, for one minute he buried his face in his hands, as if completely overwhelmed.

Then he lifted it again, and said, quite calmly, "She was such a tender little soul, too, and too dear for her. She would have died of shame and sorrow both, if she hadn't died of sorrow alone; so that I dare say it is as well as it is. Don't the parsons say that the Almighty knows best?"

And that was all the remark he made; but you might almost have said that he was relieved. He knew that if poor little Dolly had been given her choice, she would not have elected to live as things had turned out; and that as her heart must needs break, he could afford to be thankful that the worst of the pain was over.

It did not seem to trouble him more that she had believed him untrue.

"Because," as he said within himself, "it was only for a little while, and she knows better now."

When his advocate, sitting alone with him in his cell, leaned forward, looked him searchingly right in the eyes, and said, "Mr. de Lacy, you plead 'Not guilty,' of course, and nothing will now alter the line of defense I have marked out for myself; at the same time, I want to know if this is the actual truth—you understand?"

"No," Wild Will answered, steadily.

"I am not sure that I do understand. You see, I ain't accustomed to lawyers, and they confuse my head."

"Very well; I'll put my question more plainly. Is your plea absolutely and entirely true?"

Wild Will stared at him with a kind of horror.

"Why, you don't mean to say you'd underlie my defense if you had the least doubt of my innocence, do you?"

"Being guilty according to conscience, and guilty according to law, are two different things; and the law is my trade, you know."

"Then it is a confoundedly dishonest trade, that is all!" said Wild Will, hotly;

"and if they hang me twice over, I'll have nothing to do with it!"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, I won't be defended, if it's such a hounding as all that. I thought you were taking my part because I was ill-used."

The lawyer shook his head.

"I am sorry to say I cannot afford to be so disinterested."

"Then that settles the question without any more trouble, because I don't happen to have more than a few pounds in the world. And if I were ever so rich, I'd never pay a man for defending me against his own conscience. I dare say you think it's queer for me to talk like that, and put it down to affection, but I don't believe I did any harm in the world, except to spend money I hadn't got. There was poor little Dolly, to be sure,—and he stopped to sigh—but I loved her very dearly, though I was a poor, careless fellow to have such a treasure to guard; and if she didn't mind putting up with things for the sake of our being together, I don't see that any one had a right to interfere."

"But I understand that your wife's father is very invertebrate against you, nevertheless."

"He's an old man, and he forgets what it is to be mad in love, and have every one against you. Known all the world over, if I had my time to come over again, Dolly and I would be very happy what little time we had together; and it's something to look back upon with pleasure these dreary hours in prison."

"Only, you see, she might have been allowed now if she hadn't consented to follow your fortunes."

"How do you know?" inquired Wild Will, sharply.

"There's more ways than one of going out of the world. But we mustn't talk about her," and his lips were convulsed by a sharp spasm of pain. "It would be a good thing for both of us if we were well off as she."

Mr. Jenkins then referred to the subject of his defense; but, to his surprise, the prisoner held firm to his determination not to employ any one to plead his cause.

"I see every one thinks me guilty," he said; "and let it be so. All the palavers in the world won't save my life now. If I could escape, I would; but as there's no chance of that, I'll take the matter quietly, and let them do their worst."

"But you are destroying your one single chance of life by your obstinacy," the other urged.

"And what then? I shall be the only loser."

"You say that the coat from which a fragment was torn by poor Miss de Lacy never belonged to you at all?"

"No."

"Can't you account, then, for the way in which it came into your possession?"

"No, I can't; and, what's more, I don't mean to try."

"But you are just throwing your life away," remonstrated Mr. Jenkins.

"It's no use fighting against facts. There's Mrs. Collison to prove that I gave it to you, with some more of my things; and there's Captain Vane to prove that the piece torn out of it was stolen whilst I was staying at Brierston, and that I departed suddenly afterward, without leaving my address behind; and who, do you suppose, would believe, after all this, that I never had a coat like that in my life? Indeed, I've no doubt that my tailor will come forward and swear that he made it for me, and that, as a matter of course, I owe him for it still. I am learning not to be surprised at anything nowadays. According to your own showing, the case is just as ugly as can be."

"That's no reason why you shouldn't try and get off."

"But not your way, or by your means, thank you," said Wild Will, so determinedly that Mr. Jenkins felt it would be wasting words to say any more.

He could not help regretting the young man's folly; but there was nothing to be done, so he came, and took his leave.

The trial came on in a few days, and the astonishment of the court was very great to find the prisoner undefended. He was offered help, but quietly declined, for the same reason that he had rejected Mr. Jenkins's valuable services.

When the usual question was put to him by the judge—whether he was guilty or not guilty, he answered gravely, but firmly, "Not guilty, my lord."

Captain Vane was one of the witnesses for the defense, and perhaps he had pity for the wretched man who stood in the very mean position now from which he had so recently escaped; for though he had once been an invertebrate against him, he spoke gently enough, and with an evident desire to give the prisoner the benefit of any doubt.

But when questioned about the coat, he could only say that he firmly believed it to be that which poor Winifred had caught at in a last despairing effort to escape.

The fragment which he had found on the river-bank, and preserved so carefully, having been stooped from him, he was

unable to compare the two; but he could have no doubt whatever on the subject in his own mind. Still, in law, conjectures are not evidence, and Captain Vane's scrupulosity was one point scored in the prisoner's favor, for no one who had not the strictest notions of rectitude and truth would have hesitated to swear that they were actually the same; but the young officer's feelings had changed to such an extent that he was thankful to feel, as he stepped off the witness-box, that he had not done Wild Will as much harm as he might.

It did not seem possible that he was innocent. But that wild thirst for revenge which Captain Vane had felt at first was gradually softening, and now he began to understand that the evil spirit he had been encouraging was drawing him farther and farther from Winifred in Heaven.

And then an indescribable something in Wild Will's manner had touched him. He had expected him to bluster, and swagger, and protest his innocence; instead of that, he stood calmly and bravely in the dock, without the faintest sign of fear or concern, quite as though he had been born to be a hero.

"I am sure you are very kind."

Was he speaking ironically? Major Chester might have fancied so, only that he looked so smilingly benevolent, so exquisitely urbane, so totally incapable of hating even a fly.

He had to make a strong effort, however, before he could go on.

"You may, perhaps, have noticed my growing affection for your daughter, Mr. de Lacy."

"It is always a matter of course that people should learn to like Madeline as they learn to know her."

"But mine is far beyond liking, sir."

"I am glad to hear it, Major Chester—very glad indeed," he answered, cheerily.

"The praise of a man who has travelled so much as you have is worth having."

"I am sure that the love is equally valuable in you."

"Well, then, isn't that rather a strong way of putting it?"

"I could put it twenty times stronger, but it is better to err on the side of mercy," according to his humble opinion, even if you did come into collision with the law—which sentiment was greatly applauded in court.

Wild Will, in spite of the reckless life his unfortunate relatives had led, Mr. de Lacy said he felt sure he could never have been guilty of the crime imputed to him. He asserted this three or four times, at least; and yet, somehow, in spite of his kindly disposition, he did Wild Will more harm than any of his enemies, while fully impressing the whole court with the conviction that he would almost have sacrificed his life to secure the prisoner's acquittal. Dolly's father was next called.

For the first time, Wild Will began to tremble. Terrible in his wrath, in his fierce denunciations against the murderer of his child, his animus was still so evident that the prisoner might have escaped even yet if the old Squire had not been such a warm friend.

Unfortunately, he could not prove where he had been on the day of poor Winifred's death. Mrs. Collison was brought forward to show that he left town that very morning, and did not return for several days; and as Wild Will had had a special reason for keeping out of sight during this interval, he had naturally taken every precaution to secure secrecy. Dolly, had he been living, could have told of a stolen hour passed with him under the whispering elms, just as the stars were coming out, and of their listening together to the church clock striking nine; and as Brierston and London were fifty miles apart, this would have demonstrated how impossible it was that he could have been Winifred's destroyer. But Dolly was dead, and not a living soul who knew him had seen her since she had been buried in the earth.

"For your wife?"

The old Squire repeated the words softly and incredulously.

"Madeline your wife? Oh, no, no!"

and he shuddered involuntarily.

Mr. de Lacy looked at him calmly and searchingly, and simply said, "Indeed!"

Feeling that he had made a false step, Major Chester hastened to add, "It is because of this I have learnt to love and admire your daughter so much, that I feel she is the only woman I could ever desire for my wife."

"She is the only woman I could ever desire for my wife?"

The old Squire repeated the words softly and incredulously.

"Madeline your wife? Oh, no, no!"

and he shuddered involuntarily.

"Dear sir, I dare say you would be satisfied with me as your wife."

"I am quite sure that you think so; but pray do not let us begin the argument all over again. I am quite tired out. As it is, I will answer for Madeline's happiness fearlessly."

"At any rate, it is only right to warn you, sir, that I shall strain every nerve to see her again."

"You shall see her again without any such exertion, Major Chester. Kindly tell me, and I will do my best to see that she is well."

He led the way out as he spoke, and the young man followed, wondering.

(To be continued in our next.) Commenced in No. 8.)

A WONDERFUL MEETING

BY JACK RATTIN.

ARTHUR.

A stately ship lay rocking in the long swell of the South Pacific. A dead calm; and a dead calm at sea does not mean that the sea is at rest. No—the ocean is never quiet, even for a moment, and when not a breath of air is at rest, the great rollers rise and fall without ceasing.

The men are scattered about the decks, and in the tops, some carving whale's teeth, others at the sail, all the rest engaged at the starboard braces. But they were too late to avert the shock entirely, and the howl of the Water Witch dashed in over the rail of the other craft, and she struck slightly on the quarter and glanced off, tearing away the mizzen ratlines as she went. But all breathed more freely as they flew on their course, because the shock had been so slight, when the eyes of Jake Fisher fell upon a mass of rigging entangled with the bowsprit in the midst of which hung suspended a woman's form, clinging for life to the spar.

"Out there, Bentus and Forbes," cried Arthur. "Quick!"

The two men darted out and quickly brought the lady aboard. She was not injured, but looked wildly about her as Captain Campbell advanced.

"Arthur!"

In an instant she was in his arms, her golden head pillow'd on his manly breast, it was Argus Fortune, the girl who had promised to be his wife, who had been called to the "States" by a peremptory message from home. She had been carried over the rail by the bowsprit of the Water Witch, but clinging to the spar, had been saved, to find shelter in the arms which gave her protection, and with the help of which best for her, until they were called to pass through the valley of the shadow.

The captain is standing on the quarter deck looking out across the pathless sea.

He is young, commanding no small craft, certainly not more than thirty two, a hand-some young Hercules, who has faced the wind and sea for many years. His eyes have an eager look in them, for his heart is away in San Francisco, where a sweet girl has promised, when his ship comes into port, to put her hand in his and aid him in the journey of life.

If he ever comes to port. He is angry at the wind, which will not rise and bear the Water Witch on her way. Angry at the sailors, who take things so coolly, for their pay goes on however the wind blows. Whistling for a breeze is slow work, and Arthur Campbell tired of it.

"Confound the luck," he muttered.

"Oh, for a wind—the stiffest gale that ever roared across the sea."

Still the same dead calm, and still the ship lay upon the long rollers and dropped heavily into the trough of the sea. Still the sky was blue as jasper, unclouded by a single cloud.

"You want a wind, Arthur," said the first mate, a grizzled old sea-dog coming up to the quarter-deck. "I suppose you will laugh at me when I tell you that we'll be running under bare poles before five hours."

"Pshaw, Jake," replied Arthur. "No such luck I'm afraid. Only look at that sky."

"I know it," replied Jake Fisher, shaking his gray head. "I suppose you are a fool, but then you know I'm more than a fool."

"But it is sufficient reason for you to die, Mr. de Lacy," said the major; "there is one great bond between us—we both love Madeline."

"Oh, rather, say that I love her, and you think you love her."

"I am afraid, sir, it is an unquestionable fact."

"Then, my theory is," pursued Mr. de Lacy, quietly, "that you know, the moment you meet a person, whether he is an antagonist or sympathetic. I may be unusually sensitive, perhaps—no doubt I am—but I had not been in your company five minutes before I knew that we could never be friends."

"And your theory is," said the major; "that you are a man of great strength, and that you are a man of great heart, and that you are a man of great mind."

"I cannot see where the difficulty lies myself, sir," was the somewhat haughty response.

"Can't you, indeed? Should you like to live under the same roof, and come into daily communication, with a man whom you disliked, and who suspected you?"

"Not if I were absolutely sure of the fact."

"And your reasons, Mr. de Lacy?" demanded the major.

"I have already given you a powerful one, it seems to me."

"But it is based on a misconception, sir. It is based on a misconception, that this man loves you, and respects you, and that he has already accepted me."

"Conditionally."

"Major Chester was forced to admit that, at the same time," he continued, "she was so good as to confess, to my great joy, that she liked me sufficiently to make you consent necessary to her happiness."

"That was just like Madeline," responded the major, smiling.

"She is not to be consulted, then, in a question so vital to her interests?"

"Madeline and I think alike on all subjects, Major Chester; therefore, if I refuse her, she refuses as a matter of course."

"But she has already accepted me."

"Conditionally."

"Major Chester was forced to admit that, at the same time," he continued, "she was so good as to confess, to my great joy, that she liked me sufficiently to make you consent necessary to her happiness."

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"She is not to be consulted, then, in a question so vital to her interests?"

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"But she has already accepted me."

"Conditionally."

"

THE LAST REQUEST.

BY GRACE GARLAND.

Come sit beside me, love, and let my arms around you twice;
So I soon must quit this temple for a house with the Devil—
Some words you desolate, in deep, heart-piercing woe,
And there are words of comfort I would speak before I go.
You have been, with loving tenderness, my often childless way,
Ever striving thus to shield me from the burden of the day;
You have called me, husband dear, so gentle, noble, true;
While second only to our love has been my love for you.
And some few cases so precious, whom we've held so very dear,
Will keep them close to God and thee; o'er me, mine, mine;
It has been a pride to lead them nearer, nearer to the God of us.
Yet as Christians now, we'll surely have beneath the chastening rod;

But oft it's hard, so very hard to leave you here alone;
Will another come to fill the place of your loved and lost?—
It is not so little girls will often sadly miss a mother's tender, sweet care, a mother's good-night kiss;
But choose one with a loving heart and Christian spirit;
And for poor sake, perhaps she'll love and bless my darling, too.
When the busy care of day is o'er, oh, think of me;
Tis then I'll come to bless and guard you home to Heaven.
Our union there will happen as than any here on earth;
As we wander, with one living hand, where fades less grow;
Oh, we'll keep many a green, dear one, while life itself has gone.
Twill prove a golden link between the present and the past.
And now, good-night, be faithful, love, to the sacred trust given;
When a glorious dawn will greet us on the blissful shores of Heaven.

A HIDDEN WRONG;

or,

Too Trusting and Too Fair.

BY MRS. ELIZABETH MORRISON.

CHAPTER XXII.

BOUBETTE'S HOUSE.

Dr. Heatherton's patient, the old Frenchman Boubette, confirmed old Rosetta's opinion of his disease by remaining very bad, and making no satisfactory effort toward recovery.

The doctor controlled the terrible pain from which the miserable man suffered, but his weakness and fever increased, and the colored nurse shook her head ominously when the doctor having walked over from his last visited patient where he left his carriage, entered the house one morning.

"He's mighty low dis morning, dat's a'rtic," doctor," she observed as she led him into the small room opposite from Mr. Boubette's chamber. "He's been sleeping for a little while and lying quiet, but all last night he kicked and raved like he was crazy, yah ha, he talked mighty funny den, tell you, old master did."

This was the first opportunity Heatherton had found, in spite of his best efforts, to speak to the old woman without the cognizance of Boubette; and although his visits to the house had been frequent, and purposely made at unexpected times, he had been unable to see the least trace of Engene's presence, so that at last he had come to almost doubt his own sight in discovering the artist there.

Here, however, was a chance, and one he was not willing to leave untried; the Frenchman was asleep, and if he was any judge of the human countenance, Rosetta was not indisposed for confidential conversation.

He began by assuring himself of the reality of Boubette's slumber, and being satisfied on that point, he made Rosetta's handsome present of coin at which she grinned and nodded approvingly.

"And now I want you to tell me what became of that young gentleman whom I saw here the first night of my coming?" he said in a low but audible tone.

"Martin, Martin," returned Rosetta, "I know'd you seed him jes' as sure as I know'd you had eyes, and what's more I spec he know'd you, 'cause he acted so queer."

"Yes, I know him," the doctor said impatiently, "pray less so time, your master may rouse from this fitful sleep at any moment, so less no time in telling me all you know about my friend."

Den he's your friend?" Oh, golly, young master's your friend!"

"I see, you go on."

"I see, going on," Rosetta said, and so she did after some little preamble about her new faith with Boubette until she saw that he was likely to die, and began to dread her own helplessness when left alone in the world without a friend.

"Dat's what I want, you see," said the old woman, slyly. "I've getting old, and when master's gone nobody would care for dis old soul 'cept she can tell 'em somethin' worth hearing."

"If you can give me any information about my friend, I shall certainly remember you kindly, Rosie," the doctor said, "and you may rely on me in the future if you make yourself useful now."

"You're a gentleman, dat's what I say," cried Rosetta, approvingly; "and so was young master too, only he's gone now, and I can't tell where. Now don't you rile your feelings, doctor, but jes' listen to it all. Old master has some mighty queer folks a-comin' here, and 'mong 'em is dat Jim, dat come here de night you fust come. Well, one night afore dat when was gettin' near morning I woke up sudden-like, and I hear talkin' down here, and so I slide down to listen. Master has a queer kind of bell that wakes him and nobody else, and with that he lets in folks at night, he's done it for years, but this time I thought I'd see what it was. When I got to de door I see dat Jim, and an elegant young gentleman not one of the kind Jim used to fetch was sitting here, and dey was talkin' bout de young gent's pa and ma. Golly, didn't he look pale and sickly when he spoke of dat dead and gone folks, and old master promised to help him trace all out of dat set of her graves I spect, and Jim he was to help and git lots of money for his share. Dat's true, doctor, blest ef' taint; dat young gent come here and talked dat way, and round old master till all of a sudden he disappears, and I don't know nuffin' bout him."

"And when did you see him last?" the doctor asked, excitedly; but before he could receive a reply, the woman sprang up with frightened eyes, and opening a door seemed part of the wall, she thrust him in terrified haste, just as the entry door unclosed to admit Jim Ball, who saluted Rosetta with something like a growl.

"What's the old 'n up to?" asked Jim.

"Old master's sleeping, Master Jim," Rosetta answered, cheerfully. "Poor old master, he's very strong now, and needs a snooze when he can get it, you know," she added.

"Well, I ain't got time to fool, so I'm bound to see him," Jim said, doggedly. Rosetta seemed to oppose him, and Heatherton, to whom every sound was distinctly audible, though he stood in utter darkness, heard her beg the man to desist, though with such an amount of noise that Rosetta's querulous voice came piping in broken accents from the bed to demand what was the matter.

Then Jim plunged at once into the subject of his visit.

"I want to know where young De Courcy is," he demanded. "You know our barin' and you desolate, in deep, heart-piercing woe, And there are words of comfort I would speak before I go.

You have been, with loving tenderness, my often childless way,

Ever striving thus to shield me from the burden of the day;

You have called me, husband dear, so gentle, noble, true;

While second only to our love has been my love for you.

And some few cases so precious, whom we've held so very dear,

Will keep them close to God and thee; o'er me, mine, mine;

It has been a pride to lead them nearer, nearer to the God of us.

Yet as Christians now, we'll surely have beneath the chastening rod;

But oft it's hard, so very hard to leave you here alone;

Will another come to fill the place of your loved and lost?

It is not so little girls will often sadly miss a mother's tender, sweet care, a mother's good-night kiss;

But choose one with a loving heart and Christian spirit;

And for poor sake, perhaps she'll love and bless my darling, too.

When the busy care of day is o'er, oh, think of me;

Tis then I'll come to bless and guard you home to Heaven.

Our union there will happen as than any here on earth;

As we wander, with one living hand, where fades less grow;

Oh, we'll keep many a green, dear one, while life itself has gone.

Twill prove a golden link between the present and the past.

And now, good-night, be faithful, love, to the sacred trust given;

When a glorious dawn will greet us on the blissful shores of Heaven.

she knew already all it could tell, but she narrowly watched Mrs. Blanchard's face and tried to follow its changeable workings while Mrs. Barton bent over the words she was slow to decipher.

When she had concluded, her visitor's mind was evidently made up, for she laughed easily and said:

"Pshaw! what mysterious girls will make out of trifles? Now I'll tell you what it all means, neighbor Barton. Lucy was silly enough to become home-sick and leave her New York place before she had probably tried it. She regrets her folly, and according to my advice has gone back, but in place of an open sensible departure, she prefers this odd sort of flight. Well, she's all the same in the end, you know."

"But she never even told Marian," Mrs. Barton said with a puzzled face, "she never."

Mrs. Blanchard knitted her brows angrily and brought her thin lips together with an impatient snap.

"I have given you the explanation I was bound to offer to set your minds at ease," she said, outly, "but I do not undertake to answer further."

In the most subservient manner, Mrs. Blanchard tried to change her words and expression of face.

"I'm deeply indebted to you, ma'am," she declared, "and you're certainly made us both feel very comfortable. I'm sure I look to you as my one friend and reliance, and I try to be grateful for all your—your—"

"There, never mind," interrupted the appalled visitor; "I want you to please bring me a diret bullet from Mr. Allan, concerning his health; and give him this package of grapes, from me, while I wait."

With profuse thanks his mother received the fruit, and departed on her mission.

And then Mrs. Blanchard turned, with a keen look in her roving eyes, toward Marian, who had not uttered a sound throughout the interview.

"This is your only hope, my girl," said she, rapidly. "I have saved you from a world of trouble, and smoothed the way for anything that may follow. You know that you owe this to me, and resent the obligation—but you cannot help being my debtor, my pretty Marian; and your silence and hauteur are as vain as they are foolish."

Marian looked toward the door—there was no sign of her mother's return, and she took advantage of this moment to appeal to the woman she believed her evil genius.

"Why do you pursue us thus?" she implored, in a voice broken by the intensity of her feelings. "Why do you drive as from place to place, and interfere with every plan and effort we make to regain what is lost?"

To this she added something about believing that the Frenchman's illness was only a sham to hide some plot then in progress. He repeated his threat, with many embellishing oaths, and swaggered out of the room and the house.

Then Rosetta soothed her master and quieted him in her own peculiar fashion, and having succeeded, closed the door between the rooms and opened the slide behind which Heatherton was stationed.

With her finger on her lip, she led the way to the front door, begging the doctor in a low tone to hurry round the square to where he had left his carriage and drive back in that, as if he had come to pay a visit.

"You have heard all dat talk, and you don't know what to make of it, I see. Well, dat was the young master's fix—he was the head 'most turned wid all de secrets. But jes' you bring him back now, and old Ronnie 'll tell him something dat no one ain't told him yet, and dat's de whole truth; Martin sure I will, you jes' find him, doctor."

"I will try to," said Heatherton, earnestly; and he would have stayed to say more, but the wily old woman warned him that Jim might return at any moment and find him there, and urged him to come back with his carriage and make his usual visit to dismorn suspicion.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MRS. BLANCHARD'S EXPLANATION OF FACTS

"What is the meaning of this, Marian?" Mrs. Barton asked, coming down stairs nearly an hour later than the receipt of the scribbled note in the needle case.

She had a piece of written paper in her hand and looked in a confused and astonished way at her daughter, who had by this time recovered her consciousness and was holding her throbbing head between her hands, and half-reclining on the lounge to which she had raised herself.

Marian looked at her half vacantly for a moment, and then said, "I don't know, mother," and seemed to want to shrink away from the sight and sound of everything.

"Are you sick, child, or what is the matter with you?" questioned her mother, "I declare it's enough to turn my face red."

Occasionally she winked, for her eyes were dimmed with tears, and she took her leave and swept down the steps in her rich drapery.

A stout common-looking woman, in a black dress and bonnet, rather jostled against her in her desire to get to her carriage, but Mrs. Blanchard was too fully occupied with the face she left behind her, to notice the one that instead of making a humble apology, peered closely into hers with something very like a mocking grin upon it, as the rude woman went sauntering on her way.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AGAIN ENTHRALLED.

The person who had so unmercifully run against the lady, on her way to her carriage, kept walking forward quite undisturbed by compunctions at her want of civility.

Occasionally she winked, for her eyes were dimmed with tears, and she took her leave and swept down the steps in her rich drapery.

From the steady nature of her movements and the resolution in her small, gray eyes, it was apparent, to a close observer, that this female was engaged in carrying out a fixed plan, and awaited its result with some anxiety. Three times did she walk round the same square, each time with increasing impatience, that suddenly changed to satisfaction at the sight of a tall, dark man in a travelling-cap and cloak, who called to her familiarly as he came up.

"Well, Mother Meg, you're up to time, and a little earlier, too, I see."

"Why yes, Ralph," answered the woman, who was indeed Meg Worthy, of Todd's crick and other dubious localities; "first one falls ill, and then another dies."

Mrs. Barton began to apologize with her usual humility, but Mrs. Blanchard interrupted her in her own quick way.

"Something's wrong, what is it?" asked the woman, inquisitively, and she took her leave and swept down the steps in her rich drapery.

"I—I—that is she—er—er, I'm ashamed to tell you, she's been ill for years, but this time I thought I'd see what it was. When I got to de door I see dat Jim, and an elegant young gentleman not one of the kind Jim used to fetch was sitting here, and dey was talkin' bout de young gent's pa and ma. Golly, didn't he look pale and sickly when he spoke of dat dead and gone folks, and old master promised to help him trace all out of dat set of her graves I spect, and Jim he was to help and git lots of money for his share. Dat's true, doctor, blest ef' taint; dat young gent come here and talked dat way, and round old master till all of a sudden he disappears, and I don't know nuffin' bout him."

"And when did you see him last?" the doctor asked, excitedly; but before he could receive a reply, the woman sprang up with frightened eyes, and opening a door seemed part of the wall, she thrust him in terrified haste, just as the entry door unclosed to admit Jim Ball, who saluted Rosetta with something like a growl.

"What's the old 'n up to?" asked Jim.

"Old master's sleeping, Master Jim," Rosetta answered, cheerfully. "Poor old master, he's very strong now, and needs a snooze when he can get it, you know," she added.

Marian scarcely listened to this reading,

it; and this girl's nothing to me now, you know."

"Yes, but she is to me; I want her, and I will make it worth the trouble—aye, a dozen, dozen times, if you bring her back."

Mrs. Worthy spoke with earnestness, bordering on vehemence, and caught the arm of her companion with an emphatic pressure to mark her words.

"Come, I'll be frank, old mother, and save trouble," Ralph said, after a little consideration on his part. "I'm tired of adventure, and want rest. I'm on game now, that must yield well; it's bound to do it; and after this trick's over, I'll throw up my hands and lay tiles for the rest of my life. I'll say goodbye to old scenes, and begin anew in other lands, and all that, you understand."

"But your trick isn't won, won't you?" cried the woman, with a pained expression.

"Not until I've got my hand full," she said.

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and French jewelry, you'll be almost as handsome as I am. Ha, ha, ha!"

Miss Gimpner seemed to enjoy this idea immensely, and Marion tried to look pleased and smiled also, controlling her shrinking aversion at the woman's familiarity and coarseness by remembering her own necessities and the value of her place.

After luncheon Miss Gimpner retired to the inner room, where she brushed and twisted her hair and arranged all her admiring over and over again, while Marion remained at the counter and sold a few articles of perfume, &c., that were called for.

Presently, as the afternoon wore on, the store began to fill up with gayly dressed gentlemen, all more or less familiar with her complexion, who called for gloves, handkerchiefs, cravats, and all sorts of fancy articles, which they chatted over and laughed about, and finally bought.

Marion had scarcely time to note a strong mixture of familiarity, boldness, coquetry, and coarseness that characterized her companion's manner toward those purchasers, before her own time and attention were fully occupied with those who preferred to be waited on by her.

They were not a few, and she would have been quite elated by her success as a saleswoman, had it not been for a painful consciousness of freedom of manner on the part of the men who dealt with her.

Boys as she was, and concentrated as her attention necessarily needed to be, she could not help overhearing their bold inquiries concerning her, nor catching Miss Gimpner's inevitable reply.

"Oh, she's a new fan of Pandar's, he's bound to find out which one of you is weak on the delicate white rosebud kind of beauty. Ha, ha, ha!"

(To be continued in next issue. Commence in No. 8.)

DAYS OF OLD.

BY ANSTLEY H. BALDWIN.

All the forest glows with crimson, all the sky is barred with gold,
And the glinting of the gloaming is a fair sight to see,
Brighter than the sunset, fairer than crimsoned trees.
The morn of bygone days, as they come back to me.

For, walking by the river—on the winding river back,
Where the willow trees hold the russet, and the reeds
Are green and rank,
Where the moorish skims the surface, leaving silver in her track,
To the days of love and Springtime does tend. Fair
ey to me back.

When I pinched the water-lily for a fair girl, as
we walked,
And the nightingale sang strains to us lovers as we
walked,
When the breeze that stirred the poplar music
seemed to us of biles—
When the ring-doves on the pine-tops taught our
whiling lips to sing.

Oh! friend! the heart glow that waits on love and
Spring,
When childhood seems but Summer and rose-hued
days,
There is no life! Autumn! half so sweet a story told,
As the dear old tale of May-time, happy, happy tale
of old!

CLAUDIA'S TRIUMPH.

BY CLEMENTINE MONTAGU,
"AUTHOR OF 'THE COST OF CONQUEST,' ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN AWKWARD RECONCILE.

EMILIA. But jealous minds will not be answered
me.
They are not even jealous for the cause,
But for the sake of what they are jealous. 'Tis a mon-
ster.

Repose upon it, Heaven, keep that monster from
climbing up to me.

EMILIA. Late, now—
Shakespeare.

Lady Nortonshall could not forget the insults her fiancé had received from the actress, Frank, or both combined, for she could not believe that her letter could by any possibility have miscarried, and she judged that he no longer cared for the interest, she took to his wife and happiness.

"It is cold and heartless," she said to herself, when all hope of hearing from him was at an end, "and thinks me bold and ungrateful for having written to him at all. He is like all the world—there is no all to care for me now—not one—not one!"

Mrs. Everfield was seriously annoyed at her fitful spirits and worn, harassed look. She knew nothing of the letter which had been written, but she associated poor Alma's depression with the story of Frank Vavasour's accident, and was proportionately angry with her for it.

"I am utterly and thoroughly ashamed of you, Alma," she said to her one night, after her triste looks had been the subject of remark from more than one person.

"Why, aunt?"

"Why, aunt! As if you did not know I think my Lady Nortonshall might have more pride than to go moping about like a love-sick school girl for the sake of a man who is not her husband, and who—"

"Oh, aunt!"

"Oh, you may exclaim and look as sentimental as you please—it's the truth, you know. Let me finish what I was going to say."

"You have said quite enough."

"Who does not care for her, was the conclusion of my sentence. Have you no spirit left that you let every one see that Lord Nortonshall's wife cannot repress her feelings for her old lover even in incognito?"

"Lord Nortonshall's wife is moping for no man but her husband, madam," Alma retorted, indignantly. "You are hard to be now, and hard and cruel!" she continued, after a pause. "Have I not cause to look at? What wife in all Paris would endure what I do, hour after hour, and day after day, and not complain? Do you think it is nothing to me to hear your husband's name coupled with this woman's in terms which no wife should listen to? Is it not enough that I am left alone to die, for ought we care, while he is by her side whispering of love into her ears that have, perhaps, listened to the same tale from the lips of hundreds of men?"

"It is enough to bear, Alma, but if you showed the spirit you should, &c., would not be so much."

"No, perhaps not. You would have me dance when my heart lies like lead in my bosom, laugh when my tears are choking me, be gay and festive when the memory of my misery sends a stab through me with every breath I draw. That is the fashionable way of showing *spirit*, is it not? I can do it, but there comes an end to it, thank Heaven! Such a struggle cannot last long—it ends in one of three ways."

"How?"

"Either the spirited creature becomes a callous, heartless, sinful woman, lost to all sense of self respect or the respect of the world, or she goes mad, or dies. One of the two last will be my fate!"

"I do believe you are mad already. Oh,

if my poor brother had only let me have my way in bringing you up, you would have been more tractable now."

"I should have been a model woman, I have no doubt—a girl without a heart, a wife without soul, feeling—an automaton! Perhaps it would have been best if my father had not fostered the love that was in my nature; but you see, aunt, he did not intend me for a fashionable wife or a worldly woman."

"No, his romantic notions have spoiled you," remarked Mrs. Everfield, dryly.

"Stop!" exclaimed Alma, passionately. "Not a word of that sort! Whatever he taught me was right, my dear, kind, honored father. Oh, that I were lying by his side now at Westerpark! Oh, father, father, that I might die and be at peace with you!"

"Hush, Alma! hush!" said Mrs. Everfield, as her niece burst into passionate tears. "It is all for the best, some way, depend upon it."

But it was in vain she tried to soothe Alma now. There was ample reason for grief. She had enough to bear, poor young wife.

Her husband's career in London, and his studied neglect of her, were subjects openly discussed; and many persons put an utterly wrong construction on the matter, and chose to assume that some misconduct on Lady Nortonshall's own part had caused this separation, and treated her accordingly.

But for Mrs. Everfield, she would have seconded herself altogether from society, and no given color to the reports which were not about her. She did not say she wanted to be left alone, "in peace," as her husband's will had it, but her husband's will that she should stay abroad, and her own wish to return to England, and more than all to Westerpark.

"If I could only be there once more," she said to her aunt, "I would be content to stay there all my life. I don't care for gayety. He is welcome to do as he will. Oh, aunt, do you think he will let me go?"

"You forgot Westerpark is let," Mrs. Everfield replied. "You cannot turn your tenants out for a whim like that. I have no doubt Nortonshall Castle will be at your service, if you so particularly fancy the country."

"Not that part of the country," she said, sadly. "Nortonshall is very lovely, and every one there was very kind to me but it is not home."

"I don't know where a wife's home should be, but in her husband's home," said Mrs. Everfield, snappishly. "You are quite idiotic about Westerpark, Alma. You couldn't expect to stay there all your life."

She little thought how soon they would both come to Westerpark, and under what circumstances.

Only two days after the above conversation a letter came, addressed to Alma in a hand she did not know. The postmark was London, and when she opened it an enclosed letter dropped out. It was from her husband's lawyer, and was very brief.

"Never mind my lady," Mrs. Everfield said, smiling, "I'll go to bed and make all the necessary arrangements for you."

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vehemently: "I have reason for what I say. This Claudi, if such be her name, is false, deceiving."

"But why should you say this—you have never met her?"

"Never—never seen her but once, on the stage—and never wish to. Shall I tell you what I know she did? For if my letter had ever reached you, and you had told me as you say you do, you would have risen from your death bed to answer it."

Frank looked at her in utter astonishment. Her words and manner were so wild that they were utterly beyond his comprehension.

"What can you mean?" he asked, after a pause.

"Mean? Why, that when I heard you were dying—that was what they told me—and my heart was breaking for a word of news from you, and I knew not how to obtain it, I wrote to that woman. I heard that she was with you, watching you, nursing you back to life—where I would have given mine to be—and I thought to myself, 'If she loves him she will pity me.' I wrote to her, there was a note enclosed for you, not one word of which the whole wide world might not have read without thinking any evil. It was concealed—your love might have read it had she so willed, perhaps she did; but this I know, she neither gave it to you nor answered me."

"I cannot understand you. I never heard of any letter. No line from you would have been left unanswered by me."

"I know that; did I not say so? She—this woman whom you love and respect (you would not if you knew all)—kept my letter, and laughed at the writer."

"No, no; you wrong her. You will know yourself that you wrong her some day. If any letter ever came from you, it was no malice of hers that kept it back. She is candor and honesty itself. But we will speak of this again. Are you staying here?"

"Only for the night. I came to see old Hannah at the lodge. They seem to think she knows something she has not yet told about that fearful night. Hodgson sent for me."

"And for me also."

"Strange? Then you are here to see her?"

"I am. But you are not alone?"

"Oh, no, my aunt is up at the house; but she is too tired for anything, so I sailed out alone. I found Hannah asleep, so strolled out, which accounts for my being here. I thought at first you were a ghost, Frank."

She smiled as she spoke, but it soon faded away.

"I must go," she continued. "It is not right for me to stay here talking to you, and Hannah will most likely be awake now."

"There is no harm in our meeting," he replied. "The only evil deed has been mine, and the sound of your voice brought back the old time so strongly that I forgot myself. I shall not offend again, believe me, Alma."

"I would trust you with my life, Frank, you know; but I am alarmed. Suppose that a whisper of our meeting should reach my husband's ears?"

"What then? It was purely accidental."

"Ah! but he would not believe that. We must not meet again."

"You are right, Alma. For both our sakes it would be better not, though Heaven knows the thought is very bitter to me. Let me say good-bye to you now."

And he held out his hand.

"Nay, Frank, I will walk with you to the lodge. My business here is the same as yours. We have a mutual interest in whatever that poor old woman may have to tell."

So she placed her arm within his as she spoke, and they walked toward the park gates.

"Do you think that Hannah really knows anything?" asked Alma, after a pause. "The letter sent to me was very urgent, or I should not have come in such a manner."

"So was mine urgent, yet hardly explicit," he replied. "I judged from it that the poor old woman was delirious; but the merest thread of a clue will be sometimes sufficient to unravel the most complicated entanglement, so I started at once."

Hodgson himself was watching at the door for Alma's return. He started when he saw how she was accompanied.

"So they've met!" he said to himself.

"Pretty dear, that's just how I've seen her look many a time, leaning on his arm—Ah me! I'm afraid that she's not happy, now that no evil may come of their meeting."

Then found Hannah awake when they reached the lodge, and anxiously asking for "Miss Alma." Softly they went into the little room, and bent over the lowly bed, where Asriel's wings were already hovering, to hear what the dying woman might have to tell them.

Lovingly and tenderly she took their hands, and held them in her own. She had seen them grow up from infancy together, and looked upon them as children yet. The news of their parting had been said to Hannah; but she welcomed them with a feeble smile, and plunged into her story at once.

"I've a good bit to tell, and my time's short," she said. "It's lain heavy on my mind for many a long month—ever sin' I knew I'd had my warning to take leave of the world forever. But you were married and away, my dear, and Master Frank we all thought he was drowned, and I was too frightened to tell any one else what laid so heavy on my mind. I can tell you now, my dears, now that you are here together, who it was that did the murder that night. I saw him. Listen—closer, closer yet! It was—"

She paused a moment, startled by the opening of the door below, and they listened in breathless excitement for what should come next.

Hannah had spoken in gasps, and with great difficulty; but she resumed.

"It's very near, my dears," she went on. "My foot is at the threshold of the next world now, and I won't take the secret with me. Hark! What's that?"

It was a sound in the room below which made the room swim before Alma's eyes as she sank on the ground beside the bed. It was her husband's voice speaking in loud and angry accents, and she bent her head in terror, fearing as she knew not what he would do.

"I know she is here!" she heard him exclaim. "Stand out of the way!"

There was the sound of a heavy footfall on the stairs, and the next moment Lord Norton had burst into the room below.

"I was sure of it," he cried. "Stand up, my lady, and look me in the face if you can!"

(To be continued in our next. Commence in No. 2.)

"People who care what they dream about, had better keep away from Bald Mountain, Tennessee, where a noted den of rascallades has long been the terror of the country. Forty have been counted on a single rock, and on any sunny day 500 may be seen projecting from beneath a circular ledge."

A STORY OF THE PANIC.

BY WALLACE PUTNAM REED.

The great financial crash had come at last. It came when least expected. Bank after bank suspended; and the panic spread from the crowded metropolis to the smallest village—from Wall street to the cross-roads. Of course there was nothing very alarming to get frightened about, but everybody thought they might be. It was just like an alarm which suddenly makes a regular stampede, when the attacking force is probably only a few daring skirmishers. The contagion of fear is very catching.

Evil tidings travel rapidly. Everybody in Calford knew that Heavy Vernon was a ruined man. The startling intelligence ran through the village like wildfire. It was a delicious morsel for the gossips; and they straightway went to work inventing details and extemporizing comments.

The Vernons had resided in Calford for the last three years. They were not only the wealthiest people in the county, but belonged to one of the first families in the State. Mrs. Vernon had been heard to express rather sly ideas on the subject of blue blood and caste; and, as she visited only the a few, it was thought that she considered herself a good deal better than her neighbors. The head of the family was a confirmed invalid; the daughter just entering belle-ville; and the son, Mr. George Vernon, had but recently finished his college course.

Perhaps the most astonished man in Calford was the Rev. Mr. Timothy. The Vernons were members of his church; and he had known them for years—long before he came to the village. He could hardly believe his ears, when his wife news of Vernon's great fall.

"Good!" cried the Reverend Timothy, throwing up his hat.

"Wait until I finish. Nellie has written a novel; and, better still, sold it for a cool five hundred. Not much, but encouraging for a first effort, isn't it?"

"I know about the novel all the time," said Mr. Timothy. "In fact I advised her to write it. But what does Mrs. Vernon say?"

"Just what I have always said," responded the lady, entering the room with Miss Nellie. "I have always maintained that blood—the genuine blue-blood—would rise superior, under any circumstances."

"It gives you a better maxim than that," said Mr. Timothy. "It is this: 'Blood always wins!'"

The amendment was graciously accepted—and the party adjourned to the library.

Calford reluctantly accepted the good fortune of the Vernons; and in the course of twenty-four hours, grew cordially demonstrative. Colonel Jones has no idea of pressing Mr. Vernon about that seamy debt—but he is very anxious to sell George a vacant lot for his new factory, and he will probably succeed. Mr. Timothy stoutly asserts that the Vernons have proved their right to rank among the "first families" in Calford, and nobody contradicts him. "Brains always win!"

"And that is what you call owing nearly everybody?" said Mr. Timothy, with a smile.

"Oh, it is notorious," rejoined the lady, "and you know it, Mr. Timothy."

"Sarah!"

Mr. Timothy actually jumped, as he had pronounced her name.

"What, James, what have I done?"

Her husband gave her a queer look.

"Who has been talking to you this morning?"

"There is no harm in our meeting," he replied.

"The only evil deed has been mine, and the sound of your voice brought back the old time so strongly that I forgot myself. I shall not offend again, believe me, Alma."

"I would trust you with my life, Frank, you know; but I am alarmed. Suppose that a whisper of our meeting should reach my husband's ears?"

"What then? It was purely accidental."

"Ah! but he would not believe that. We must not meet again."

"You are right, Alma. For both our sakes it would be better not, though Heaven knows the thought is very bitter to me. Let me say good-bye to you now."

And he held out his hand.

"Nay, Frank, I will walk with you to the lodge. My business here is the same as yours. We have a mutual interest in whatever that poor old woman may have to tell."

She smiled as she spoke, but it soon faded away.

"I must go," she continued. "It is not right for me to stay here talking to you, and Hannah will most likely be awake now."

"There is no harm in our meeting," he replied. "The only evil deed has been mine, and the sound of your voice brought back the old time so strongly that I forgot myself. I shall not offend again, believe me, Alma."

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"You are right, Alma. For both our sakes it would be better not, though Heaven knows the thought is very bitter to me. Let me say good-bye to you now."

MY BONNIE LASS.

I passed beneath the shade of a wide-spreading tree,
And heard a voice ring out, "Bonnie and lass,
I know who was coming, coming to me—
My own bonnie lass."

Winging she came, round the still plainer pond,
From the dense wood over the little beyond,
And my heart it would beat with a welcome sound.

"My own bonnie lass."

Winging she came, and the bright sunbeam glared,
Had shone with a radiance that I have never seen,
The brilliant she seemed of all things fair,

"My own bonnie lass."

She gazed in my eyes with her eyes of deep blue,
Her arms round my neck she tenderly drew,
While soft fell her words, refreshing as dew,

"My own bonnie lass."

Her dimpled cheek lovingly resting on mine,
I felt her heart in my bosom, and her love,

And, lost in a train of blissful dirges,

I heard her faint whisper, "I'm thine—ever thine—

"My own bonnie lass!"

C. C.

RIGHT OR LEFT?

BY SPHINX.

"The skies were sullen and dark,
The leaves they were crisp and sore,
The leaves they were withering and sore—
It was a night in the bonnie October,
Of my most immemorial year."

came out of a popular minor voice, in a free, wild impulse of expression under surrounding influences. Figure stand at the cross-roads. It was that who sang, and the words were not less weird than the gloaming. Her dress floated in the wind, and she raised her hat slightly as she stood undecided which road to take; so that the breeze might cool her forehead.

"Now a person to whom these two roads were matters of indifference, would of course steer carelessly to the left; but as no one to take the wrong road first (if the 'left means wrong?') she soliloquized, "And a very religious, rather superstitious person would *desirably* choose the right road. I feel a little in sympathy with the latter, the man said that *this* one was the shorter road, and yet, and yet I believe I'll take the left to see what comes of it!" No sooner said than done. She consequently got into her long, swinging gait, and looking over her shoulder to prove herself quite alone, took up her rhythmic cadence to keep company. She inhaled the damp, mazy exhalations of the fields with the nose of a naturalist, and passed into the crooks and crannies of the road, as she glided swiftly onward. She passed a narrow lane, and did not like its dark appearance; she was nearing a bit of gloomy ground on the left, when she burst out again, into the words which haunted her musical imagination—

"It was a night in the bonnie October
Of my most immemorial year."

when straight ahead of her, she saw the figure of a man reclining on the grass near the roadside.

He was within a few yards of her, was looking at her, had heard her voice, and the words. A terror took possession of her, yet she walked boldly toward him, her eyes fixed upon his in anticipation of any way he might make. "What eyes!" she thought, "shall I ever forget them?" No wonder she asked herself the question, for they were the most attractive features of the face, and *unmistakably* in, the fact that they seemed more *shining shields* in his thoughts. Blankly dark and so dark!

She was now within a yard of him, and still looking at him, indeed, as it were holding him there with her glance, till she should pass. His head rested on his left hand, and his black soft hat was pulled down over those eyes, and then flattened outward, showing a low line of forehead. His expression never wavered the slightest, he behaved, and was still beholding when she passed him. She wanted to run, but was too proud; but such a walk! the trees seemed to spin past her, a turn in the road at last brought her in sight of a low rumbling wagon. The nightfall was already at hand, and the house she was looking for nowhere in sight. She hailed the driver.

"Please direct me to Miss Martha Agnew's cottage!" The man turned. He was old, gray, and worn out in appearance, and seemed too weary to evince surprise even. He placed one hand upon the gravel in his wagon, and answered—

"You are a good quarter of a mile out of the way, young lady. You ought to have taken the lane just below here, it branches off to the right."

That was the very lane she had shunned at in passing, and then to go back! she would walk miles first!

"Well, if I keep straight, on how soon will I get there?"

A faint doubtful smile came over his face—a hint of her mental organs being defective, but he replied soberly—

"In two hours or thereabouts! Some people like to go all around Robert Keith's barn, I never could see the sense of it exactly! But I never was married," he mused. "Now if you had a sweetheart with you, miss, I might reckon on your choosing the longest road." While she was standing irresolute she heard a voice coming nearer and nearer, singing her words, her song! She turned a frightened face backward, and waited! But right out of the woods, opposite the cart, appeared an enormously tall man, and as she expected, suddenly, the one she had passed a quarter of a mile below.

"Good evening, Mr. Farmer."

"How are you, Jacob?"

He paused, then searched for something in numerous pockets, at last produced a yellow envelope.

"I found this in the road—is it yours?" holding it toward her.

She took it in an envelope addressed to herself— "Winfred Keith, Care of—." Here it was torn, but below was written in lead pencil, "Ask for Miss Martha Agnew's cottage (at the station), Thorpe's Lane, and Turnpike."

"Yes, it's mine," she answered slowly, regarding it carefully.

He turned to the old man, asking some uninteresting question, and adding nothing further, she retraced her steps, and when out of their sight ran rapidly.

It was very dark, but she would soon be with her grand-aunt at the place she was now clearing the road. Ah, yes, 'twas all right now! Crossing the dark little lane, there was a whitewashed fence—no, a gate! She opened it, and found her self approaching the old barn she had not seen since her childhood. How stupid not to have remembered this lane back of the house and the gateway, through which the cows were driven home at night! She came around the side of the house, looked in upon the homely dining-room, and saw (her pleasant sight) that she was expected. It was the same Aunt Martha who welcomed her at the door, only a month older! It made her young voice unsteady for a moment as the dear, firm, warm-hearted group of the wrinkled hands caressed her cool, slender fingers, which

tightened with the ardor of youth and love. So many years had elapsed since her memorable visit to the old lady—years that had been passed in many countries—in many scenes of change, and here she had not looked for it, in this quiet country home, where things seemed to have always at a certain and familiar quietude to a have forever! She thought of it later, and often—her heart was deeply moved, and sympathized her thoughts deeply with—

"Aunt Martha, who is Mr. Farmer?"

"Mr. Farmer! Not here fifteen minutes, and acquainted with our celebrity already. Well, I never!"

"For what is he celebrated?"

"For idleness, I presume," the old lady answered, changing her wondering tones to those of righteous indignation. "At least that all I ever found him distinguished for. He's rich—but what of that?"

"I'm rich myself, and so are you."

"I know it," her niece answered, laughing heartily.

"He often drops in to see me," the old lady resumed. "What he comes for I can't imagine, unless it be that he prefers my services to those of the rector."

"Oh, aunt, don't let him come while I am here," her niece exclaimed, excitedly.

"That, then, would exclude him altogether. And Winifred," said the lady sharply, "he is my neighbor, if he is lazy, and no ordinary man, let me tell you."

"I do not doubt it, but I do not wish to meet him—he impressed me very unpleasantly this evening." She then related what had happened, omitting the song.

"That's just like him, the great idle slagger, for he sleeps away half of God's great gift of time, though his eyes are open. Where his thoughts are, it's difficult to say."

The subject was dropped, and it changed that Miss Keith saw nothing of this bite no more for a week. One evening the sitting-room door opened, and he walked in. Her heart had gone down to the barn to give some directions to her farmer. The niece, with her unaccountable, wholesome dress of this man, was face to face with him in the sitting room, entirely dependent upon their previously accidental introduction. She wished him anywhere else as she offered him a chair. He took the sofa in preference. She sat near the old-fashioned oil-lamp, and was playing annoyingly with her pen and partly written letter. Those very non-committal eyes were resting upon her, just as when she had first walked down that left-hand road.

"Why," she thought, wrathfully, "did I not take the right? But he must be entertained!" She turned toward him with a perplexed contraction of the eyebrows. "Aunt is very long returning. Will you have a book?" or—

"No, thank you, I am no reader."

"And is determined I shall be no writer," she thought, impatiently.

"You do not like me, do you?" he said, abruptly.

She looked now obliquely at him, and heard herself saying, "Well, candidly, I do not—you are right."

"Few people like me," he said, walking over to one of Stanfield's water-colors that she had given her aunt, and beginning to stare at it.

"Whose fault is it?" said Miss Keith, biting the nib of her pen, as he returned to her seat on the sofa.

"I shall take care that you call me *mother*!" she exclaimed, wrathfully, coming into the room.

"I shall take care that you call me *mother*!" she said, with a perceptible contraction of the eyebrows.

"I don't see how you will prevent it, Miss Sophia!" he ventured, in musical softness of utterance.

"It won't be necessary to be named by you all—when you will see me—I presume!" she returned, sitting down grandly to finish that unsatisfactory letter.

"Oh, you don't mean to absent yourself altogether, do you, when I come over?" Aunt Martha says I can come when I please!" It will be rather tiresome, to always be getting out of my way—won't it?"

She tossed her head, without responding.

"Miss Keith, I must see a great ogre in you. I want very few ladies, and all over fifty."

She bit her lips, and choked back a laugh.

"No answer yet? Well, well make a compromise. I'll call you 'W. S.' and you can return the compliment with something equally brief. Good night, ladies! I used to stay—but am driven from your very door. The genial current of my soul is frozen to the core!" he resumed.

And the half door slammed, the second time, after him, before the lock would catch, so he just caught Winifred a low exclamation of—

"She laid down her pen.

"She is right! I have no aims."

"Are you characters?"

"Not quite."

"Seek work then."

"I am not fond of work."

"Then don't complain of your idle luxury."

"You have taken Aunt Martha's place in the pulpit—a very efficient substitute!"

She turned away—took up her pen, and began to write rapidly. He picked up his hat, stepped out of the window on to the porch, right over the low sill, and was gone, before she could say "Jack Robinson."

She laid down her pen.

"Aunt says you are sinless and idle!"

"She is right! I have no aims."

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